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HUMAN EVENTS
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Strong Reagan Backing

Anti-Agee Measure Moves Toward Passage

President Reagan, Sen. John Chafee (R.-R.I.), Sen. Henry Jackson (D.-Wash.), Atty. Gen. William French Smith and Rep. John Ashbrook (R.-Ohio) deserve major credit for their role in finally pushing through Congress the Intelligence Identities Protection Act. While the legislation is not quite yet law—it must first go to a Senate-House Conference—the measure boldly comes to the support of U.S. intelligence operatives overseas.

For the first time, it makes the deliberate publication of the names of covert U.S. intelligence officials a felony. Passage of the law has been seen as a necessity within the security community for some time because such anti-Americans as CIA defector Philip Agee and pro-Communist publicist Louis Wolf have been busily printing the names of supposed CIA officers, intentionally imperiling their lives in the process.

Sen. Jackson laid it on the line. "These malefactors," he said, "have persisted in risking the lives of courageous public servants and threatening our vital foreign intelligence activities."

The legislation has crawled through Congress at a snail's pace. The need for it was seen as long ago as Dec. 23, 1975, when CIA Chief of Station in Athens, Greece, Richard Welch, was gunned down by terrorists outside his house. He had been murdered after an editor of a local paper had "exposed" him as an agent and then printed his home address. The editor later disclosed he had received a tip about Welch through an American publication called *CounterSpy*, with which Agee was then closely connected.

The home of Richard Kinsman, an American diplomat in Kingston, Jamaica, was raked with automatic gunfire and a bomb just 48 hours after he was named as a CIA agent by another Agee publication, *Covert Action Information Bulletin (CAIB)*. During a July 2, 1980, Washington news conference, Louis Wolf, a co-editor of *CAIB*, named Kinsman and 14 other members of the embassy staff as working for the agency and provided home addresses, unlisted telephone numbers and license plates as well. The names were rebroadcast on Jamaican television, then controlled by Prime Minister Michael Manley, a pro-Castro sympathizer. Kinsman's home then became a target for terrorists.

Similar incidents followed and the threat continues today. Just last October, Agee traveled in Nicaragua when a strident anti-American campaign was under way. On November 6, the pro-Sandinista newspaper, *Nuevo Diario*, published the names of 13 alleged CIA officers assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Managua. U.S. officials there, stressed Jackson on the Senate floor, "believe the publication of those names was linked with Agee's visit. Several of the individuals named in the list soon received death threats, and the families of all these American officials were evacuated for their personal safety."

Four more incidents followed in which single female employees of the U.S. Embassy in Managua were accosted and/or had their homes entered. In one of the instances, an employee's home was entered by force, the guard tied up and the employee accused and threatened. The men were overheard to wonder whether the employee's name was "on the list."

In still another incident, several men stopped an employee returning home at gunpoint. They took her, a Nicaraguan acquaintance, her maid and a guard prisoner. After tying, gagging and blindfolding them, the men proceeded to empty the apartment of all its contents. During the course of these events, in which the Nicaraguan maid was beaten, the assailants were quoted as saying, "We are doing this so that CIA personnel will have to leave," so that "all Americans will have to leave." Just before leaving the apartment, one of the men was quoted as saying: "You are CIA and our hands are itching to kill you."

This is the kind of harassment that most patriotic lawmakers desired to put a stop to. But the remedy became difficult. The major media, which have long been contemptuous of America's security, either internal or external, began to launch a crusade against any effective legislation dealing with the matter.

The New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, Sigma Delta Chi, news "watchdog" Jack Landau and similar types were howling against any hint of meting out punishment to those exposing U.S. agents abroad. The anti-internal security squad, led by the ACLU and Morton Halperin, were in a state of apoplexy.

But reason prevailed. The House Select Committee on Intelligence reported out a bill to try to put a stop to Agee-like disclosures. Yet the legislation, marred by ACLU-shaped language, was not strong enough. So, on the floor, Rep. Ashbrook offered an amendment, personally endorsed by the President, which toughened the wording, making it easier for a prosecutor to